

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 IO-10 SAB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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R 161522Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8610

INFO AMEBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 12687

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG XF US

SUBJECT: SADAT ON LEBANON, PLO, US VETO

REF: A. BEIRUT 15140

B. FBIS AMMAN JN 142334

C. BFIS LONDON LV 141017

1. IN LAST FEW DAYS PRESIDENT SADAT HAS MADE FOLLOWING PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON EGYPT'S ME POLICY, ALL OF WHICH INJECT NEW NUANCES INTO GOE PUBLIC POSITIONS:

A. LEBANON. AT JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH FRENCH PRESIDENT DECEMBER 14, SADAT SAID " IT IS NOW RPT NOW TIME THAT WE MUST SAY LEBANESE POLITICIANS THEMSELVES ARE RESPONSIBLE" MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE "BECAUSE THEY HAVE PERMITTED THE SITUTATION TO REACH SUCH TRAGIC POSITION. THEY KNOW FOREIGN INTERFERENCE EXISTS" BOTH FROM "CERTAIN" ARAB COUNTRIES AND THE BIG POWERS. "THEY KNOW THIS," PRESIDENT REPEATED TWOCE. ASKED IF GOE WOULD INTERVENE, CONFIDENTIAL

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EVEN AS MEDIATOR, BY FRENCH CORRESPONDENT, SADAT REPLIED

FRANKLY "NO" (REF B).

2. INCIDENTLY, THIS SADAT STATEMENT FOLLOWED AN AHAM COMMENTARY DECEMBER 13 BY PROMINENT POLITICAL WRITER BAHAL-DIN, WHO RECOMMENDED MORE EGYPTIAN INVOLVEMENT, HE CITES STATEMENT BY RAYMOND EDDE TO MONTE CARLO RADIO TO EFFECT THAT GREAT POWERS ARE PLOTTING TO CONTINUE FIGHTING AND THAT ISRAEL'S PLAN IS TO PARTITION LEBANON. BAHAL ADDS PLOT AGAINST LEBANON ALSO IS INTENDED DRAW FANGS OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE SO THAT WHEN TIME COMES FOR PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL TALKS, THEIR POSITION WOULD BE WEAK. BAHAL STRESSES THAT PLOT MAY BE FOREIGN BUT LEBANESE LEADERS ARE RESPONSIBLE. HE SUGGESTS SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, ALGERIA, AND SYRIA SHOULD TAKE AN INITIATIVE TO END LEBANESE FIGHTING; ONE OF THEM SHOULD CALL URGENT MEETING OF THESE FOUR COUNTRIES (REF A SUGGESTS KARAMI IS THINKING ALONG SIMILAR LINES).

B. SYRIAN DISENGAGEMENT. IN INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH NEWSPAPER NOUVELLE OBSERVATEUR, PRESIDENT WAS ASKED IF SYRIA WILL SIGN SECOND GOLAN DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. PRESIDENT REPLIED "CERTAINLY" (REF B). CAIRO RADIO, REPORTING THIS INTERVIEW, ALSO NOTED SADAT HAD SAID HE HAS NO DOUBT SYRIA WILL SIGN SECOND AGREEMENT (REF C).

C. US VETO. SADAT TOLD NOUVELLE OBSERVATEUR THAT US VETO "WAS NO SURPRISE TO ME AT ALL. IN FACT, I WAS EXPECTING IT." SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN USG AND ISRAEL WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT. "WE MUST ACCEPT THIS AND PROCEED FROM THIS PREMISE."

3. INTERVIEWER, PRESSING FURTHER, ASKED AGAIN IF VETO WOULD NOT CAUSE SADAT TO CHANGE HIS MIND ABOUT HIS POSITION ON BRINGING USG AND PLO TOGETHER. "NOT AT ALL," HE REPLIED.

4. COMMENT: SADAT HAD CONSIDERABLE TIME WITH MEDIA DURING FRENCH PRESIDENT'S VISIT. IN COURSE OF HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS, HE CLEARLY MADE EFFORT DOWNPLAY US VETO, STRESS GOE DETERMINATION HELP PALESTINIANS (IF NECESSARY IN SPITE OF PLO'S OWN SHORTSIGHTEDNESS) AND VOICE HIS DEEP CONCERN
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ABOUT LEBANON. ON LATTER POINT, HIS DILEMMA IS, OF COURSE, TWOFOLD. FIRST, UNLIKE SITUATION IN 1958, EGYPT IS NO LONGER IN POSITION UNILATERALLY TO END FIGHTING THERE. SECOND, SHOULD SITUATION DETERIORATE TO POINT WHERE IDF MOVE IN FORCE INTO LEBANON, FOR WHATEVER REASON, SADAT WOULD BE ON HORNS OF SERIOUS DILEMMA. IF HE DID NOT RPT NOT INTERVENE, HE WOULD LOSE CREDIBILITY AS ARAB LEADER AND USG-GOE MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY WOULD BE UNDERMINED,

PERHAPS CRITICALLY. IF HE DID INTERVENE, THIS WOULD
REPRESENT BANKRUPTCY OF GOE'S PEACE STRATEGY. FURTHER, WHICHEVER
CHOICE HE MADE WOULD PLAY INTO SOVIET HANDS.
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